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TITLE

“Once you bring life into the world, you must protect it. We must protect it by changing the world”-Elie Wiesel. Especially during the 1940s, conflicts among Jews and Nazis were brought about. Whether it took place in…….or Germany, people couldn’t get over the disagreements between Jewish people and Germans. *Summer of My German Soldier* by Bette Greene focuses on a young Jewish girl risking everything to protect a Nazi. In contrast, *Night* by Elie Wiesel centers on a teenage boy traveling to several concentration camps, struggling during it all to protect is and others’ lives. Protection is a key addition to both *Night* and *Summer of My German Soldier* in similar ways which include the protection of loved ones, protection of self, and the consequences of protection.

From the day when everyone is born, their family is the most important part of their lives. No matter the age or situation anyone is in, they will always protect their loved ones. From the moment Elie Wiesel and his father Chlomo Wiesel arrive at the gates of Birkenau they are separated from their family. From all that is known today, Elie’s younger sister and mother were sent into the furnace as soon as they arrived at the concentration camp. From that point on Elie and his father do whatever it takes to protect each other. “On the third night of our journey I woke up suddenly and felt two hands on my throat, trying to strangle me. I just had time to shout, ‘Father!’ Nothing but this word. I felt myself suffocating. But my father had woken up and seized my attacker. Too weak to overcome him, he had the idea of calling Meir Katz,” (Wiesel 96) Elie remembers as this occurs in a transport train. Even as feeble as Elie’s father was, he persevered to protect his son. Chlomo could give up on his son and leave him to be thrown out of the train. Although he isn’t strong enough to physically save him, he calls other prisoners to help get the attacker off of his son. Not only does Chlomo protect Elie, Elie does his best to protect Chlomo. In the same train scene, about 100 prisoners are being transported from one concentration camp to another with little or no food and water. During this, Chlomo was as lifeless as possible and people were yelling, “‘Come on! Here’s one! This man next to me. He doesn’t move.’ I woke from my apathy just at the moment when two men came up to my father. I threw myself on top of his body. He was cold. I slapped him. I rubbed his hands, crying: ‘Father! Father! Wake up. They’re trying to throw you out of the carriage….’ His body remained inert. The two gravediggers seized me by the collar. ‘Leave him. You can see perfectly well that he’s dead.’ ‘No!’ I cried. ‘He isn’t dead! Not yet!’ I set to work to slap him as hard as I could. After a moment my father’s eyelids moved slightly over his glazed eyes. He was breathing weakly. ‘You see,’ I cried”(Wiesel 94). Although this seems as though Elie is trying to hurt his father, without these hits, Chlomo would have been left to a slow and agonizing death on the side of the train tracks. Keeping his father alive is the mission that Elie keeps throughout the novel. Whether it is the older or younger generation, Elie and Chlomo’s instincts tell them to always protect each other.

To feel the need to protect someone usually means that they are life-long friends or neighbors. In *Summer of My German Soldier*, the twelve year old Patty Bergen acquaintances Anton…… who is a Nazi. Although Patty is Jewish and most Jews at that time feel threatened by Nazis, she feels a special connection with him and will do anything to make sure he’s safe. Within a week’s time, she welcomes him into her house and lets him stay in the extra storage room above her garage. Considering Patty’s young age, and the risks of helping a Nazi, this may seem like an unsafe idea. “‘It’s truly extraordinary,’ he said. ‘Who would believe it? ‘Jewish girl risks all for German soldier.’ Tell me, Patty Bergen-’ his voice became soft, but with a trace of hoarseness-‘why are you doing this for me?’…‘The reason I’m doing this for you,’ I started off, ‘is that I wouldn’t want anything bad to happen to you,’”(Greene 95-96) Patty expresses her true feelings for Anton. Patty loves Anton as much as to not even tell her parents of sister. This secret is not found out about until Patty’s housekeeper notices the strange behavior of Patty. Also, Patty trusts Anton enough to know that he is not what everyone else says about Nazis. Patty’s family pays less attention to Patty than her little sister and she always feels unimportant when around them. When Anton comes she feels like he is a vital part of her life and that he is more like family than her father, mother, and sister. As she feels this, she knows that she can never see him go and does whatever it takes to keep him safe. Protecting family is natural, but when family does not treat Patty like she would like to be treated, she finds Anton and makes a plan to keep him safe.

In concentration camps it is very hard for people to protect others when their own living conditions are below par. Even though Elie tries his hardest to make sure his father receives enough sleep, water, and food, he at the same time is lacking in all of this. Elie has to know what he needs to survive and may even have to take away from others to get what he needs. Also, he has to protect himself by not getting upset over the deaths and sickliness surrounding him. If he gets too overwhelmed, he can do something that is against his will and can be punished by the SS men. After running 45 miles Elie Wiesel states, “I lay down and tried to force myself to sleep, to doze a little, but in vain. God knows what I would not have given for a few moments of sleep. But, deep down, I felt that to sleep would mean to die. And something within me revolted against this death”(Wiesel 85). At this moment, Elie knows that he is drowned of energy and needs sleep. Around him, he sees bodies heaped on the snow closing their eyes and then never waking up again. He knows that maybe if he tries to sleep, he would not be in control and he may not stay alive. Elie is smart and protects himself by not sleeping. In addition, he makes sure he gets the necessary amount of food and water to keep himself living. By protecting himself, he is one of the last survivors that arrive at the final concentration camp. Eliezer knows to protect his father and other people who are on the brink of death, but he also knows to survive, he must also protect himself.

Keeping a Nazi in an extra room above your garage is a big enough secret to keep from everyone, including your family. Patty Bergen has to watch what she says in order to save her own reputation and Anton’s life. One mistake on her part could result in a raid, search, and most likely death of Anton. She has to protect herself from situations that would result in the spilling of her secret. Patty also has to protect herself from her family. There are several instances in the novel when Patty is whipped by her father. Her parents, especially her dad are strict Jews and if they found out that they had held a Nazi in their house, their punishment to Patty would be huge. In addition, Patty has to protect herself when she visits Anton. The age difference between the two is over five years. Also, Anton is a Nazi so it raises suspicion of whether he is lying to Patty to gain freedom, or he truly does care for her. QUOTE! QUOTE! QUOTE! EXPLANATION! EXPLANATION! EXPLANATION!

Asking where the lavatory is located is a typical everyday question. In concentration camps, this would be considered unnecessary, and the person asking would be physically punished. This scene actually occurs in *Night* when Chlomo simply asks an SS men where the restroom was and Elie remembers when, “he [SS man] dealt my father such a clout that he fell to the ground, crawling back to his place on all fours. In this case, Chlomo was dealt a consequence with no harm done. Sometimes, prisoners would protect others and be given an even larger consequence. Three people tried holding weapons in the concentration camp to rebel against the Nazis and free the prisoners. Their consequence was being hanged in front of the whole camp as the prisoners watched maybe their only hope of being free. At one point in the novel, Elie tries to protect himself by not giving his gold tooth to Franek, the foreman. Franek, being determined to get Elie’s gold tooth presents a consequence as he “knew where to touch me; he knew my weak point. My father had never done military service, and he never succeeded in marching in step. Here, every time we moved from one place to another in a body, we marched in strict rhythm. This was Franek’s chance to torment my father and to thrash him savagely every day. Left, right: punch! Left, right: clout!”(Wiesel 53). Although Elie is trying to protect his father and himself by keeping the gold tooth, he is dealt with a consequence that outweighs the benefits of keeping the gold tooth. Shortly after Chlomo begins getting tortured by Franek, Elie allows his gold tooth to be taken out. He tried to protect himself by keeping his gold tooth which made it easier to eat, but his father was too important to him to watch him suffer. In concentration camps, protection can be considered wrong and the consequences of protecting can seem unfair.